

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-02 SP-02 L-03 STR-04 EB-07 AID-05

DHA-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 COME-00 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /059 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:IMSILINS:LG

APPROVED BY EUR:JAARMITAGE

EUR/EE:NGANDREWS

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R 261511Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EEWT, RO

SUBJECT: ARMITAGE-NICOLAE MEETING, AUGUST 24

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REF:1)STATE 205859; 2) BUCHAREST 4915

1. AMBASSADOR NICOLAE CALLED AT HIS REQUEST ON ARMITAGE AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 24 TO CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF COMING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS. IONITA ACCOMPANIED.

2. NICOLAE OPENED MEETING BY PRESENTING ARMITAGE WITH PRINTED SET OF REMARKS MADE BY DR. SZAZ DURING HIS VISIT TO ROMANIA, INCLUDING INTERVIEW FOR ROMANIAN-HUNGARIAN MAGAZINE "UTUNK" JUNE 4. (COPIES BEING POUCHED.) SZAZ'S REMARKS INCLUDE A NUMBER OF POSITIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY, INCLUDING THE COMMENT THAT THE PROBLEMS SZAZ FOUND WERE NOT AS SERIOUS AS HE HAD BEEN TOLD TO EXPECT, AND SOME PROBLEMS DIDN'T EVEN EXIST. ROMANIAN EMBASSY EVIDENTLY INTENDS TO USE THESE REMARKS TO
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UNDERCUT SZAZ'S CREDIBILITY SHOULD HE TAKE A MORE CRITICAL

LINE DURING TESTIMONY.

3. ARMITAGE TOLD NICOLAE THAT IN MEETINGS AUGUST 23 WITH SUBCOMMITTEE STAFF, HE HAD FOUND THEM DISPOSED TO ASK

POTENTIAL WITNESSES REPRESENTING HUNGARIAN MINORITY INTERESTS TO SUBMIT WRITTEN STATEMENTS RATHER THAN APPEARING IN PERSON. THIS WAS ALSO TRUE FOR THOSE PLEADING INDIVIDUAL HUMANITARIAN CASES. OF COURSE, WE COULD NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME SUCH WITNESSES MIGHT APPEAR. ON THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY ISSUE, HE HAD FOUND UNDERSTANDING FOR OUR VIEW THAT THIS WAS NOT GERMANE TO THE PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF THE HEARINGS. TO REINFORCE THIS HE HAD POINTED OUT THAT THE GOR UNDERSTANDS CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN FOR THE HUNGARIAN MINORITY ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, BUT WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND IT SHOULD IT BE MADE INTO A POLITICAL ISSUE. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT HAD BEEN USEFUL TO TELL THE STAFFERS OF THE HOSPITABLE WELCOME SZAZ HAD RECEIVED DURING HIS VISIT TO ROMANIA.

4. NICOLAE ALSO INQUIRED ABOUT RABBI SCHINDLER'S REACTION TO HIS ROMANIAN VISIT. ARMITAGE SAID HE HAD ONLY HAD A BRIEF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION SO FAR, BUT HAD FOUND SCHINDLER GENERALLY SYMPATHETIC AND INCLINED TO TAKE A LONGER VIEW OF THE PROBLEM. SCHINDLER HAD MENTIONED PATAN'S PROMISE TO LOOK INTO THE 600 PENDING APPROVALS AND REVIEW THE 410 DENIALS (REF 2); IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO GET THIS BEFORE THE HEARINGS. NICOLAE TOOK THIS IN. HE ADDED THAT HE AND SCHINDLER HAD AGREED TO MEET AGAIN AFTER SCHINDLER'S RETURN. THIS MAY TAKE PLACE NEXT WEEK, WHEN NICOLAE WILL BE IN NEW YORK.

5. FYI: SCHINDLER IS TO MEET WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN AUGUST 25. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, US CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS, TRADE AGREEMENTS, EMIGRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE212107
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IMSLINS:LG
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760326-0322
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760816/aaaaanhy.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 205859, 76 BUCHAREST 4915
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <31 AUG 2004 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARMITAGE-NICOLAE MEETING, AUGUST 24 -
TAGS: PFOR, EEWT, RO, US, (NICHOLAE, NICHOLAE), (ARMITAGE)
To: BUCHAREST
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006